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SUBJECT: BORDER MANAGEMENT: AUSTRIA HOSTS FOURTH MEETING ON THE CENTRAL ASIAN BORDER SECURITY INITIATIVE (CABSI)

1. Summary. On June 6-7 2005, in Gumpoldskirchen, Austria, the Austrian Ministry of Interior (MOI) hosted the fourth meeting of the Central Asian Border Service Initiatives Group (CABSI), a component of the European Commission's border management program for Central Asia (BOMCA). Representatives of the Austrian MOI, European Commission, United Nations (UNDP and UNODC), International Organization for Migration (IOM), and International Center for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) discussed BOMCA programs. All called for enhanced cooperation among the donor nations and stressed the need to follow up on the February 2005 donor conference in Dushanbe. Participants also discussed the situation on the Tajik-Afghan border, which European Commission (EC) representatives called BOMCA's "most pressing problem."

SPEAKERS URGE MORE DONOR COOPERATION

2. Soeren Klem from the European Commission's EuropeAid Cooperation Office (AIDCO) in Brussels and Task Manager for the Commission's TACIS (Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States) Drug Action Program, called for enhanced donor cooperation. He said the February 2005 Dushanbe donor conference achieved good results in improving cooperation with the U.S. and other donors in Central Asia. He pointed out the need to "link our activities" in Central Asia in order to maximize donor cooperation and resources. He also urged expansion of border management programs to the South Caucasus region. Klem underscored the need for BOMCA to maintain credibility in delivering its border management programs.

3. Karl Harbo, Head of the European Commission's office in Afghanistan, noted that while the donors have different ways of approaching the overall situation in Central Asia, their objectives are the same. He said the situation on the Afghan-Tajik border is the "most pressing problem" for BOMCA in Central Asia. On Afghanistan, he said that the complete absence of rule of law and of a robust police force are the biggest problems for the country. This blocks progress in capacity building, security, and stamping out transnational crime. The CABSI forum, Harbo stressed, is important for establishing good donor cooperation and program coordination in the region. Ortwin Hennig, who leads Germany's efforts to train Afghan and Iraqi police, advocated expanding BOMCA. Interlinking border management projects in the region would more effectively reduce "cross-border problems," he said.

THE BOMCA FRAMEWORK

4. BOMCA's overall goal, according to Klem, is to help achieve political stability and regional economic growth in Central Asia. It does this by achieving strict control of the green borders, establishing a limited number of effective border crossings, and fostering cooperation among border police and customs services. Such measures, Klem said, will facilitate the legal flow of people and goods. It will also eliminate trafficking in illicit goods, corruption, and other transnational crime. Klem introduced two subcomponents of BOMCA. The Central Asia Drug Action Program (CADAP) prevents drug trafficking and drug abuse. The European Commission's new program for the fight against crime in Central Asia (CRIMCA) will reinforce Central Asia's operational capacity to fight money laundering and organized crime.

5. The European Commission's Department of Justice and Homeland Affairs manages BOMCA from Brussels. According to Sezin Sinanoglu, a Deputy Resident Representative for the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and for BOMCA and CADAP in Kyrgyzstan, UNDP jointly implements BOMCA and CADAP through field offices in Central Asia. It subcontracts specialized projects to the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and to the IOM and ICMPD. UNDP pays ten percent of the costs of BOMCA and CADAP, and funds the salaries of BOMCA's regional managers in Bishkek, Philip Pierce and Alain Scolan. They are responsible for providing technical advice, ensuring "European visibility," and implementing BOMCA programs. Sinanoglu said that "delivery" is a key theme this year for BOMCA. She also said Brussels hopes to expand participation in BOMCA to the new EU Member States, which have recent experience in reforming border management practices to EU standards.

16. Klem and Pierce said the European Commission's total budget for BOMCA is just over 43 million euros. This includes money for ongoing projects (BOMCA 4.1, BOMCA 4.2, and CADAP 2), contracted projects beginning later this year (BOMCA 5 and CADAP 3), and projects the European Commission has funded, but not yet approved (CADAP 4, BOMCA 7, and CRIMCA). This figure does not include the UK's two million euro contribution to BOMCA.

BOMCA, CADAP, AND CRIMCA TIMETABLE AND FUNCTIONS

17. According to Pierce, BOMCA 4.1 and BOMCA 4.2, implemented in January 2005 and March 2005, have a total budget of over 8.5 million euros. The programs, main objectives are to bring Central Asian legal frameworks in line with EU standards, to demilitarize the border guard services, and to develop cross-border cooperation. Further goals of these programs are to standardize training curricula and to modernize border guard training facilities. In the "pilot border regions," BOMCA 4.1 and BOMCA 4.2 will provide new infrastructure, equipment, and training, develop mobile units, strengthen border dog capacities, and conduct other capacity building measures. BOMCA 5 (January 2006 - June 2008), BOMCA 6 (January 2007 - December 2008), and BOMCA 7 (January 2008 - December 2009) will expand on these sectors of assistance. The program plans to include Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan during these next phases. According to its planning forecast, the EC is budgeting a total 16.2 million euros for BOMCA 5, 6, and 7.

18. Pierce noted that the EU and UNODC implemented the CADAP 2 program in March 2004, with a budget of over 4.9 million euros. CADAP 2's legal assistance component encourages countries to adopt international drug conventions. CADAP 2 is working to create Drug Profiling Units that will enhance interdiction efforts at airports, seaports, and land borders. The program will also establish a centralized drug intelligence capability within the regional police forces. UNDP and EU experts are also providing CADAP 2 assistance to the Ministries of Health. This will improve collection and analysis of drug abuse data, and will provide drug prevention and treatment to high-risk groups in Central Asian prisons. According to Sinanoglu and Pierce, CADAP's treatment efforts include "harm reduction" efforts (e.g. needle exchange) to fight the spread of HIV-AIDS.

19. According to its planning forecast, the European Commission is budgeting three million euros for CADAP 3 (July 2005 to July 2007) and five million euros for CADAP 4 (April 2006 to April 2008). CADAP 3 will reinforce counter narcotics measures in BOMCA's pilot border regions. It will also improve the quality and collection of forensic drug data for use in law enforcement investigations. CADAP 4 will strengthen anti-drug units in the Ministries of Interior. In addition, it will expand EU cooperation with the Central Asian Ministries of Health to bring drug prevention and treatment measures more in line with the EU acquis.

110. According to Klem, CRIMCA is a new Justice and Homeland Affairs program that will reinforce Central Asia's operational capacity to fight against organized crime. CRIMCA will focus on developing Interpol information systems and on additional measures to combat money laundering. The Commission is budgeting five million euros for the project, which will tentatively run from January 2007 to December 2008.

BORDER EFFORTS IN TAJIKISTAN

111. On Tajikistan, Klem said the European Commission is working closely with the U.S. to ensure non-duplication of efforts. Karl Harbo told poloffs the that EC is moving forward with budgeting plans to fund port of entry facilities on both sides of the Nizhiny Pyanzh River Bridge. Harbo added that senior Tajik and Afghan border guard officials made official contact for the first time at the Dushanbe donor conference. He said the EU should encourage regular meetings between the Tajik and Afghan services to exchange information and training ideas.

112. Giles Dickson, Head of the Drugs and International Crime Department in the UK's Foreign and Commonwealth Office, said the UK is spending its two million euro contribution to BOMCA on capacity building and mobile detection and communications equipment for Tajikistan. Dickson said the UK is trying to ensure this equipment is compatible with the Afghan border guard service. Dickson urged BOMCA to deliver on its programs by remaining engaged in the region "for the long haul." One of the UK's main priorities for its EU Presidency, Dickson added, will be to implement the new EU Drug Action Plan. Among other things, the plan commits EU member states to increase their counter narcotics assistance to Central Asia and Afghanistan.

Brown